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Dear Senator Quayle:

I am writing in response to your letter of November 9 enclosing a request from your constituent, that the U.S. use "the Soviet hostages that have been taken in Grenada" to discover the whereabouts of Raoul Wallenberg.

First, let me state that it is not the policy of the United States Government to take hostages. This type of behavior has been thoroughly condemned by this country and by the international community. The Soviet personnel on the island of Grenada were diplomats, and as such were protected by the United States forces that landed on Grenada. As soon as conditions permitted, the United States Government arranged safe passage for these diplomats off Grenada.

I would like to assure you, however, that we are engaged in other more appropriate efforts to encourage the Soviets to reveal the whereabouts and fate of Raoul Wallenberg. Most importantly, in October, 1981 President Reagan signed a bill which made Raoul Wallenberg an honorary citizen of the United States. Making Raoul Wallenberg an honorary American was an important symbolic act. It let the entire world know how much we admire Raoul Wallenberg's courage, how many are inspired by his dedication to humanity and humanitarian principles, and how much we deplore his unjust and illegal punishment by the Soviet Union.

At the same time, the State Department made the Soviet Government formally and officially aware of our continued dedication to finding out the truth about Raoul Wallenberg's fate. To date, we have not received a satisfactory response from the Soviet Government, but we shall continue our efforts to resolve the tragic mystery of Wallenberg's fate until the Soviets provide a full and satisfactory answer.

The Department of State has pressed its efforts both on a bilateral basis and at international forums, such as the Madrid CSCE Meeting and the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva. In this regard, last year our representative to the U.N. Human

The Honorable
Dan Quayle,
United States Senate.

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- 2 -

Rights Commission, Mr. Michael Novak, urged the Soviet Union to make "a humanitarian gesture, which would contribute to universal good-feeling, namely, a renewed search and full report, which may lay questions to rest; or else, in the best of all possible outcomes, result in the discovery of the whereabouts of a man who stands among the heroes of our time." At this year's session of the Commission, on February 22, Alternate Representative Walter Berns again raised the issue of Raoul Wallenberg, whom he termed, "one of the genuine heroes of World War II, and one of the war's most noble spirits." Mr. Berns suggested that the U.N. Human Rights Commission's working group on disappearances be authorized to "make a renewed search and a full report" on the case "involving the most famous of all disappeared persons."

We have also continued to work closely with the Government of Sweden to try to confirm reports that have come to light about Wallenberg. To date, we have been unable to confirm any of the reports suggesting that Wallenberg might still be alive. We intend to continue to cooperate fully with the Government of Sweden and all other interested parties in a persistent effort to obtain information that will clarify the fate of this brave man.

On August 3 Edward J. Derwinski, Counselor of the State Department, testified in Congress on the subject of Raoul Wallenberg. As he stated on that occasion, "Our position has remained consistent and clear. Until the Soviets provide a full clarification of Wallenberg's fate, the United States will not accept as final the Soviet assurances that Wallenberg died in 1947...I can assure you categorically that this matter will be raised again in every appropriate forum."

I hope the above information provides some idea of the various avenues current'y being pursued by the State Department in our efforts to resolve the mystery surrounding the case of Raoul Wallenberg.

If we can be of assistance to you in this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

W. Tapley Bennett, Jr.
Assistant Secretary
Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

Enclosure:

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